

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 DHA-02 ARAE-00 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15

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P R 021500Z AUG 76

FM AMCONSUL SAO PAULO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7109

INFO AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

AMCONSUL RIO DE JANEIRO

AMCONSUL BELEM

AMCONSUL PORTO ALEGRE

AMCONSUL RECIFE

AMCONSUL SALVADOR

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAO PAULO 1802

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, SHUM, BR

SUBJ: HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN SAO PAULO

REF: STATE 184183

1. THE ARA WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS CABLE MENTIONED THAT THERE IS DEEPENING CONCERN IN WASHINGTON ABOUT THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN THE SOUTHERN CONE. IT IS WORTH NOTING THAT THERE HAS BEEN SUBSTANTIAL IMPROVEMENT IN THIS AREA IN SAO PAULO.

2. FROM VARIOUS DEPARTMENT MESSAGES IT WOULD APPEAR THAT THERE IS DEEPING CONCERN IN WASHINGTON WABOUT THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN THE SOUTHERN CONE. ALTHOUGH THE CURRENT FOCUS IS ON CHILE AND ARGENTINA, IT IS WORTH NOTING THAT THERE HAS BEEN A MARKED IMPROVEMENT IN HUMAN RIGHTS IN SAO PAULO THIS YEAR. CONGEN HUMAN RIGHTS SOURCES--THE CATHOLIC CHURCH LINKED JUSTICE AND PEACE COMMISSION, CARDINAL ARNS, OPPOSITION POLITICANS, AND CIVIL LIBERTIES LAWYERS-- HAVE UN-ANIMOOUSLY TOLD US THAT THEY HAVE RECEIVED NO RECENT EVIDENCE OF ABUSE OF POLITICAL PRISIONERS.

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3. THE DEPARTMENT WILL RECALL THAT SAO PAULO BECAME THE FOCUS

OF HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN BRAZIL LATE LAST YEAR DUE TO THE DEATH OF TWO PRISONERS, JORNALIST VLADIMIR HERZOG AND A WORKER, MANOEL FIEL FILHO, WHILE THEY WERE BEING INTERROGATED BY THE POLICE. PUBLIC OUTCRY OVER THE DEATHS LED PRESIDENT GEISEL TO REPLACE THE COMMANDER OF THE SECOND ARMY WITH GEN. DILERMANDO GOMES MONTEIRO. MONTEIRO IS GIVEN CONSIDERABLE CREDIT, EVEN BY THE OPPOSITION, FOR IMPROVING THE TREATMENT GIVEN TO SUSPECTED SUBVERSIVES. SUSPECTS ARE REPORTEDLY EXAMINED BY A DOCTOR BEFORE AND AFTER INTERROGATION TO ASSURE THAT THEY HAVE NOT BEEN MALTREATED AND TO PROTECT THE AUTHORITIES FROM ACCUSATIONS AFTER SUSPECTS HAVE BEEN RELEASED.

4. THE PRESIDENT OF THE JUSTICE AND PEACE COMMISSION, PROF. DLMO DALLARI, TOLD CONGEN OFFICERS THAT THE COMMISSION WAS NOT TURNING TO BROADER QUESTIONS OF HUMAN AND POLITICAL RIGHTS SINCE IT HAD RECEIVED NO RECENT REPORTS OF MALTREATMENT OF POLITICAL PRISONERS.

5. COMMENT: PRESIDENT GEISEL REPORTEDLY GAVE FIRM ORDERS TO GENERAL GOMES MONTEIRO TO AVOID TORTURE DURING INTERROGAIONS. HOWEVER, IT IS ALSO WIDELY BELIEVED THAT THE HEIGHTENED POLITICAL ACTIVITY BEFORE THE NOVEMBER MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS FURTHER INHIBITS ABUSE OF SUSPECTED SUBVERSIVES.

6. EMBASSY CONCURS IN THIS MESSAGE.
CHAPIN

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